

**CITY OF ROCHESTER
COMMITTEE ON URBAN DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENT
2122 CAMPUS DR SE
ROCHESTER, MN 55904**

The Committee on Urban Design and Environment (CUDE) met at 11:30 AM on Thursday, May 21, 2009 in Room 104 City Hall, Rochester, MN.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Judisch – Chair, Nora Dooley, Gail Eadie, Mark Engel, Sandi Goslee, Mark Jasmin, Stephan Lewis, Terry Spaeth, Jesse Wallace, Pauline Walle, Jean Weathers-Lowin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dick Abraham, Lindsey Meek, Roger Nelson, Dave Petersen, Zach Thaler

OTHERS PRESENT: Kellie Threinen

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

The meeting was called to order at 11:35. Mr. Jasmin made a motion to approve the February, March, and April minutes; the motion was seconded by Ms. Dooley. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Stephan Lewis was welcomed as an official member of CUDE.

There were no referrals or notes of appreciation to discuss.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Jasmin asked that we set up a meeting with the City Council regarding Mr. Lewis's presentations in March and April. Ms. Goslee asked to postpone this until New Business due to a related item that she'd be bringing up.

NEW BUSINESS

Walgreens

Ms. Threinen gave a presentation on the Walgreens drugstore proposed for the intersection of Civic Center Drive and 11th Ave NW on behalf of the Kutzky Park Neighborhood and Imagine Kutzky Citizens' Council. Imagine Kutzky has been working with the City on new zoning for the neighborhood. They like to work with developers to make projects more pedestrian friendly.

The main issue with the proposal is that the drive-thru lane wraps around the building, creating a "concrete moat". This makes it difficult for pedestrians to access the building. Ms. Eadie commented that Walgreens worked a pedestrian friendly plan for their Grand Avenue store in St. Paul. The moat was designed due to curb cut and traffic concerns raised by City Public Works. Kutzky's focus is to get the building up to the street. Ms. Threinen also said that Walgreens has been working with the neighborhood to upgrade the façade to give it an urban look and scale. The Kutzky association is requesting that CUDE send a letter to the

City Council to get rid of the moat, build up to the property line, and basically follow the principles of the newly adopted Complete Streets ordinance.

Mr. Jasmin stated that we need to get City Public Works on board with the Complete Streets principles. Mr. Engel said we need to give City Public Works a solid rationale for changing the proposed curb cut locations; Complete Streets would do that. He suggested that Mitzi Baker take a look at how this proposal meets the Complete Streets policies.

Mr. Jasmin stated that if CUDE were to write a letter to the City Council, it should address the following points: concerns about the moat, meet Complete Streets policies, improve safety, provide a pedestrian buffer from traffic, and applaud the façade plans that Walgreens has worked out with the neighborhood. Mr. Lewis added that a lot of this hinges upon Walgreens' perception of the site; it is urban, not suburban. With one opposition, the group agreed to send a letter to the City Council; Mr. Jasmin offered to draft it for group review.

CUDE Structure

Ms. Goslee said that concerns have been raised about the number of members in CUDE and the lack of a quorum the past three meetings. She also stated that there is a desire from some Council members for CUDE to be more actively involved in design review.

Ms. Eadie stated that we may need to look at splitting the "urban design" and "environment responsibilities. She said that the RDA design guidelines for the Urban Village will be going to the Council in August – perhaps they could be applied to the whole city. Perhaps the RDA group could present these guidelines at the July CUDE meeting?

Many agreed that we would be well served by reviewing and focusing our charter. Ms. Dooley stated that attendance requirements should be reviewed. Ms. Walle suggested that a CUDE retreat may help us in doing this review. Ms. Weathers-Lowin stated that we should come up with a list of projects we envision CUDE working on in the next couple of years and assign folks to them. It was agreed that the June meeting should be devoted to a brainstorming session.

Adjourn – 1:10 PM; Next meeting will be June 18, in Room 320 City Hall, 11:30 AM.